



**1. What is Coronavirus and where can I find more information?**

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats and bats. Coronaviruses are part of our day to day lives and generally don't cause much more than a mild to moderate cold. The most recently discovered Coronavirus strain is also referred to as COVID-19.

Visit Public Health's Coronavirus webpage for news releases, guidance, and other resources:

<http://wp.sbcounty.gov/dph/Coronavirus/>

You may also visit [CDC's website](#) for more information.

**2. What if an employee has Coronavirus like symptoms?**

If you have Coronavirus like symptoms such as fever, cough and/or shortness of breath, it is important that you stay home and not report to work until you are fever free for 72 hours without fever reducing medication.

Additional information:

- Contact your medical provider using one of the following methods:
  - [Blue Shield Teladoc](#)
  - [Kaiser Video Appointments](#)
- Contact [The Standard for Short Term disability](#) information
- Notify your supervisor that you will not be reporting for work.
- Consider requesting approval for an appropriate leave of absence per your MOU:  
See: [Leave Request for Extended Sick and Special Leave](#) (instructions)  
[Leave Request for Extended Sick and Special Leave](#) (form)
- Review Human Resources Department [Precautions to Stay Healthy](#)

**3. What if an employee or co-worker reports to work with flu like symptoms?**

If there is a serious concern that an employee or co-worker has Coronavirus flu like symptoms or is too sick to perform meaningful work, consult your Supervisor or chain of command or Department Human Resources Officer as applicable for further evaluation.

**4. Does the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave and/or California Family Rights Act (CFRA) leave apply to me or my immediate family members, who contract Coronavirus?**

Yes, Coronavirus may qualify as a "serious health condition" under FMLA/CFRA, allowing an employee to take FMLA/CFRA leave if either the employee or an immediate family member contracts the disease. Please see [SB County Benefits Website](#) for Leave Information.

**5. How much advance notice do employees need to provide to their supervisor if they have flu like symptoms and not reporting for work?**

Employees are expected to follow the same policies and procedures when not reporting for work due to other illnesses or injuries. Per the Leave provision article of the MOU, employees shall provide reasonable advance notification of the need for paid sick leave if the leave is foreseeable.



**6. Does an employee need to attend an appointment at the Center for Employee Health and Wellness (CEHW) if he/she has been off work and exhibiting flu like symptoms?**

Employees exhibiting flu like symptoms without a fever, generally do not need to be scheduled with the Center for Employee Health and Wellness (CEHW). However, an employee will need to be cleared by the CEHW to return to work if they were diagnosed with Coronavirus and/or the flu like symptoms with a fever. Coronavirus is considered a communicable disease and in accordance with MOU provisions related to Return-to-Work appointments, the employee will be scheduled for an appointment with CEHW for a medical evaluation of their condition and authorization before returning to work.

**7. How should an employee's time be coded if they are off work due to flu like symptoms?**

Employees can use any accrued leave type for absences related to flu like symptoms through at least April 30, 2020. Employees are expected to follow the same notification procedures when not reporting for work to the best of their ability. An employee who becomes ill with Coronavirus or Coronavirus symptoms may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave which is effective on April 1, 2020.

**8. Should a supervisor or manager ask for a doctor's note for an employee who reports being ill with flu like symptoms?**

Managers and supervisors are strongly encouraged to use appropriate discretion when requesting a doctor's note in light of COVID-19's impact to the health care system. All requests for proof of illness shall be made in compliance with the Labor Code and other law. Please contact your Department Human Resources Officer should you have any questions.

**9. What if an employee, who is still working at the worksite, wants to request an accommodation due to concerns about contracting Coronavirus at work?**

Please follow the same procedure for requesting a work related accommodation in your department. Your requests will be reviewed in the usual and customary manner. The Department Human Resources Officer will work with your Department to encourage flexibility when possible if employees are impacted by school closures or are requesting modifications or accommodations at this time due to being at high risk as outlined by the CDC.

**10. What if an employee claims they were exposed to Coronavirus in the workplace?**

If an employee feels that they have been exposed to Coronavirus, please [CLICK HERE](#) and follow directions in the completing the Bloodborne Pathogen/TB Exposure Report.

**11. What if an employee tests positive for Coronavirus?**

Please contact your Department Human Resources Officer for guidance.

**12. What does an employee do if their child's school or place of care is closed and they need to care for them?**

Employees can use any accrued leave type for absences related to caring for their child as a result of a school or place of care closure through at least April 30, 2020. Employees are expected to follow the same notification procedures when not reporting for work to the best of their ability. Please also refer to frequently asked questions regarding Emergency Family & Medical Leave Act and Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act.



**13. What can an employee do if they do not have any leave balances and they are taking unpaid time off or have a reduced work schedule due to COVID-19. Can an employee file for Unemployment Insurance?**

The County cannot advise an employee to file an Unemployment Insurance claim. Each employee has a right to file a claim, and the State of California's Economic Development Department (EDD) will make the determination if the employee is eligible. Recent changes to federal law have allowed more flexibility to eligibility for Unemployment Insurance in scenarios related to COVID-19, especially as it relates to reduced hours of work. The employee should be directed to the EDD website and that a claim may be filed by phone by calling 1-800-300-5616 (English).

**14. What is Emergency Family & Medical Leave Act (E-FMLA)?**

Emergency Family & Medical Leave Act amends and expands the current FMLA on a temporary basis to provide job-protected leave up to 12 weeks and paid leave up to 10 weeks for employees who must care for a child when the child's school or place of care is closed due to COVID-19. The Act will sunset on December 31, 2020.

**15. What is the effective date of E-FMLA?**

April 1, 2020

**16. Which employees are eligible to take E-FMLA?**

To qualify for the E-FMLA, employees need to meet all criteria as follows:

- Employed by the County for at least 30 calendar days before the first day of leave, and
- Unable to work or to telecommute, due to care for the employee's minor child (under age of 18) if the child's school or place of care is closed or the childcare provider is unavailable due to a public health emergency due to COVID-19.
- Health Care Providers and Emergency Responders are not eligible for E-FMLA, please contact your Department Human Resources Officer for additional questions.

**17. What are the benefits provided under E-FMLA?**

E-FMLA allows employees who meet the qualifying reasons to take up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave. The first 10 days are unpaid, and employee can choose to use leave provided by the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act or, the employee's own leave accruals during that period. After the first 10 days, employees will receive 2/3 of pay of their regular rate of pay, capped at \$200 per day, up to 10 weeks, for a maximum of \$10,000.

**18. How does E-FMLA work with the current FMLA?**

The E-FMLA doesn't provide additional job-protected time in addition to any leave approved under the FMLA. For example, if an employee has used 3 weeks of FMLA time for another qualifying reason, the employee will have a balance of 9 weeks for E-FMLA. Unlike the unpaid FMLA, the employee is eligible for E-FMLA will now receive 2/3 of their regular rate of pay, after the first 10 days of E-FMLA up to 7 weeks.

**19. What time reporting code should be used to report E-FMLA time?**

EMFML

**20. How do I apply for E-FMLA?**

Employees may call The Standard at (844) 239-3560 or go to [www.standard.com](http://www.standard.com) and create an online account to apply for E-FMLA.



**21. What is Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (E-PSL)?**

Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act is a new paid sick leave law to provide employees with paid sick time for qualifying reasons related to the coronavirus. There are six qualifying reasons. The amount of paid time provided is based on the qualifying reason that is met. The Act will sunset on December 31, 2020. Emergency paid sick leave does not cash out or carry over.

**22. What is the effective date of E-PSL?**

April 1, 2020

**23. Which employees are eligible to take E-PSL?**

- All employees who meet one of the qualifying reasons are eligible for E-PSL, there is no duration of employment requirement.
- Health Care Providers and Emergency Responders are only eligible for E-PSL for two qualifying reasons listed below – reasons 2 and 3.

**24. What are the qualifying reasons for E-PSL?**

1. Employee is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
2. Employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
3. Employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
4. Employee is caring for someone subject to a quarantine or isolation order or a person advised to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
5. Employee is caring for the employee's child if the child's school or place of care has been closed or the child care provider of the child is unavailable due to COVID-19.
6. Employee is experiencing "substantially similar conditions" as specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

**25. What are the amounts of paid time for the qualifying reasons?**

- Paid sick time for reasons 1 – 3 as noted above:
  - Full-time employee: up to a total of 80 hours, cap at \$511 per day (max. \$5,110).
  - Part-time employee: up to average work hour over a 2-week period, cap at \$511 per day (max. \$5,110).
- Paid sick time for reasons 4 – 6 as noted above:
  - 2/3 of employee's regular rate of pay, capped at \$200 per day (max. \$2,000).

**26. How does E-PSL work with current paid sick time or other leave balances?**

Integration of current leave balances may be used to supplement pay, up to 100% pay.

**27. What time reporting code should be used to report E-PSL time?**

- EMPSL – reasons listed below
  - Employee is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
  - Employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.



- Employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
- EMPSF – reasons listed below
  - Employee is caring for someone subject to a quarantine or isolation order or a person advised to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
  - Employee is caring for the employee's child if the child's school or place of care has been closed or the child care provider of the child is unavailable due to COVID-19.
  - Employee is experiencing "substantially similar conditions" as specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

**28. What documentation can be requested if an employee requests E-PSL due to quarantine or isolation order?**

Managers and supervisors may request a statement (email or letter) from the employee which may include the following:

- The name of the governmental entity ordering quarantine or isolation or the name of the health care professional advising self-quarantine, and,
- If the person subject to quarantine or advised to self-quarantine is not the employee, but requires the employee's care, the statement should include that person's name and relation to the employee.

**29. What documentation can be requested if an employee requests E-PSL because the employee's child's school or child care is closed?**

Managers and supervisors may request a statement (email or letter) from the employee which may include the following:

- The name and age of the child (or children) to be cared for,
- The name of the school that has closed or place of care that is unavailable, and
- A representation that no other person will be providing care for the child during the period for which the employee is receiving family medical leave and,
- With respect to the employee's inability to work or telework because of a need to provide care for a child older than fourteen during daylight hours, a statement that special circumstances exist requiring the employee to provide care.

**30. Does E-FMLA and E-PSL run concurrently?**

Yes, however, this would only apply during the unpaid leave portion of E-FMLA for job protection and when E-PSL is being used for the one overlapping leave reason (timeline below):

- E-FMLA: Unable to work or to telecommute, due to care for the employee's minor child (under age of 18) if the child's school or place of care is closed or the childcare provider is unavailable due to a public health emergency due to COVID-19.
- E-PSL: Employee is caring for the employee's child if the child's school or place of care has been closed or the child care provider of the child is unavailable due to COVID-19.

**31. Can an employee take E-PSL intermittently?**

It depends on the reason an employee is requesting to take the E-PSL intermittently. Employees who are telecommuting, but not reporting to a worksite may code E-PSL time intermittently. Employees who are caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed, or the child care provider of such child is unavailable, due to the pandemic (i.e. qualifying reason no. 5) may code E-PSL intermittently if they are reporting to a worksite or telecommuting.



**32. Who is eligible to use the expanded Voluntary Time Off (VTO)?**

Employees who are deemed non-essential, unable to telecommute and are not redeployed, may request to code Voluntary Time Off (VTO) through April 30, 2020.

**33. Who is not eligible to use the expanded VTO?**

Employees who are deemed essential, that are working or telecommuting, are not eligible to use the expanded VTO. The traditional VTO provision will continue to apply to employees who are deemed essential.

**34. How can an employee code VTO?**

An employee who meets the eligibility for expanded VTO can code VTO in combination with any paid leave or unpaid leave to equal an amount they are scheduled to work in a pay period.

**35. How does VTO impact an employee's benefits?**

VTO is unpaid time that counts towards meeting eligibility requirements for benefits coverage and County benefit contributions. Employees will still be required to pay their portion of the premium. If there are not enough funds available in an employee's paycheck to cover their out of pocket cost, Employee Benefits and Services will invoice the employee.